



section that includes bibliographic citations as well as reputable sources of additional material about the author in the form of books, periodicals, or Web sites; a Literary and Historical Contemporaries sidebar, listing several famous contemporaries of the author; and a Common Human Experience sidebar, offering examples of other literary or artistic works that share themes or techniques with those by the subject of the entry.

***Works in Biographical and Historical Context*** In this section, you will find information about how events and concerns in the author's life helped to shape the author's work. For example, Russian author Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's experiences in a Soviet labor camp led him to write *The Gulag Archipelago* (1973), while his experiences battling cancer inspired his novel *Cancer Ward* (1968). This section also includes information on historical events or trends that had an effect on the author. For example, the scientific and technological advancements of the nineteenth century greatly influenced the subject matter of the works of Jules Verne, which primarily focused on "fanciful" scientific achievements such as a journey to the moon.

***Works in Literary Context*** In this section, you will find information about how the author's work fits within the context of the body of literature as a whole. This may include a description of a stylistic trait exhibited in the author's writing; for example, the literary technique known as "stream of consciousness" is a defining characteristic of much of the fiction of Virginia Woolf, and information on the technique—as well as examples of how the author used it—can be found in her entry. This section may also include a discussion of the writer's work as it exists within a specific genre, such as Gothic fiction or Surrealist poetry. Finally, the Works in Literary Context section may contain information of specific themes commonly found in the author's work. The writings of Aimé Césaire, for example, frequently address the theme of race relations in colonial regions.

***Works in Critical Context*** In this section, you will find a survey of critical and popular opinion related to the author and the author's most important works. The emphasis is on contemporary opinions, or those formed by readers and critics at the time the author's work was first published. In some cases, critical or popular opinion from the time of publication may not be available; this may be due to the passage of time, as with some ancient Greek and Roman authors, or due to the writer's lack of fame during his or her own lifetime. This section also includes information on how critical or popular opinion on an author has changed over time. Joseph Conrad and Rudyard Kipling, for example, have been taken to task by some modern critics for their depictions of race in their most highly regarded works. Some authors popular during their own time, such as Samuel Richardson, have fallen from favor among modern readers, while others virtually unknown during their lifetimes have become part of the classic literary canon.

### **Other Information Contained in This Book**

In addition to the entries for individual authors, this book also contains a chronology that indicates some major historical events related to the development of world literature. At the end of the book, you will find a glossary of terms—primarily literary and historical in nature—that are used in various entries throughout the book, along with a brief explanation of each term.